

NEWPORT COUNTY CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

TUESDAY, May 8, 2007

Held at Glen Manor House

Portsmouth, RI

MEETING MINUTES:

The meeting was called to order at 12:15p.m. by Chairperson Jeanne Marie Napolitano.

BOARD MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE WERE:

Chairperson Jeanne Marie Napolitano, Mark Stenning, Gregory Fater, Lisa Gross, Len Panaggio, Katie Wilkinson, Pieter Roos, Rocky Kempenaar, Brian Moore, Susan Samson

BOARD MEMBERS EXCUSED WERE:

Pieter Roos

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT WERE:

Shirley Mello

STAFF PRESENT WERE:

Evan Smith, J. Timothy Walsh, Cathy Morrison, Ellen Crawley

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC IN ATTENDANCE:

None

I. PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES:

The previous meeting minutes for April 10th were reviewed. A motion to accept the minutes was made by Gregory Fater and seconded by Len Panaggio. The motion passed unanimously.

II. TREASURER'S REPORT:

The financial report for March was read by Mark Stenning. City Bed Tax for February, 2007 was up 7.64% and Regional Bed Tax was down 20.18 % for a combined YTD. growth of 0.22%. Mark reviewed the revenues and receivables for the month of April, 2007. A motion to accept the treasurer's report was made by Susan Samson and seconded by Rocky Kempenaar. The motion passed unanimously.

III. STAFF REPORTS:

A. CONVENTION & TOURISM:

Tim Walsh, Vice President of Sales, reported the April & May activity is going very well. He stated that the staff is very satisfied with the new D3000 software. On May 22nd, there will be a Meeting Planners Event at the Oceancliff. Tim extended an invitation to the board members to attend. Invitations are going out for the upcoming Client Event in collaboration with the Tennis Hall of Fame, involving RI, MA and CT clients. The sales staff is also preparing for the FAM Tour in August, 2007. On May 10th a luncheon will be held in Stamford, CT for meeting planners and will utilize a new reception format.

Bookings were up and the number of room nights was down for April. As for the number of leads they were down compared to last year at this time.

Business booked for March was from numerous organizations resulting in 5007 total room nights with an economic impact of \$426,224.00.

The number of Tour Operator leads was up compared to last year's numbers in

April. The number of room nights was up compared to last year at this time. Tour Operator leads were down compared to last year in April.

B. MARKETING:

Numerous meetings and activities took place in April. The next Marketing Meeting will be on Thursday, May 24th at the Newport Marriott.

C. OPERATIONS:

Cathy Morrison, Vice President of Operations, reported that she and Evan will meet with John Rodman of the Preservation Society regarding ticket sales and the clarity of the language printed on the ticket. She stated that there is a possibility of electric counters being installed on the doors to keep track of the traffic in the Visitor's Center. Electronic boards and a flat screen TV are being considered for the Ticket Sales area. There will also be new signage for the tour buses in the bus parking lot to make it clear where they should park. Cathy is planning to add volunteers to the information staff as we enter into the summer season. On 4/9/07, Cathy was on the committee for the "1st Accessibility Awareness Day" to be held from 9-2. The public, as well as city officials, is invited to participate in a

tour of Newport demonstrating what the barriers are for those with disabilities.

D. PRESIDENT'S REPORT:

Evan Smith, President/CEO, reported that the RI Tourism Unity Luncheon will be on May 16th. He extended the invitation to the board members. For those attending a motor coach will be leaving the Visitor's Center at 10:30. Evan stated that he will be taping a show at WPRO Radio that will air on Sunday, May 13th highlighting the awareness of the economic development of tourism throughout Rhode Island.

IV. COMMITTEE REPORTS:

A. FINANCE COMMITTEE:

Mark Stenning reported that there was a Finance Committee meeting on May 4th. The 2006-2007 NCCVB Community Support grants were discussed and explained as well as a spread sheet was presented to the board members to outline the grant requests. Mark asked the

board for a recommendation to make grants in the sum of \$8,000 to the groups listed. A motion was made to approve the grants was made by Karen Oakley and seconded by Katie Wilkinson. Several board members asked questions about the scope of the program. The motion passed unanimously. Also, a motion was made to approve the organization of a sub-committee to establish the criteria necessary to apply for the NCCVB Community Support grants by the September board meeting. A motion to approve was made by Susan Samson and seconded by Len Panaggio. The motion passed unanimously. Mark stated that the NCCVB funds, after being approved by the Finance Committee, will now be handled by Bank Newport.

B. GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE:

Len Panaggio reported the Governance Committee met a few weeks ago. A proposal was made to move the fiscal year from April 1st to a calendar year and not holding meetings in February and March. Evan requested that the vote be delayed on this issue until it can be reviewed by the Director of Finance the ramifications be presented at the June board meeting. An addendum to the by laws was discussed regarding extending membership 6 months if status changes. The need to address the issue of attendance by the board members was also discussed. Guidelines were explained and qualifications to be on the board were reviewed. Interviews will be held to fill the Board of Directors vacancy due to the resignation of Harlan Tyler. These

issues will be decided and voted on at the next board meeting in June.

C. SALES AND MARKETING COMMITTEE:

Evan Smith addressed the topic of the “Travel Guide” and the two year partnership with RI Monthly and RI Tourism. Do we want to continue? The recommendation to renew one more year was presented rather than 2 years. Options for change to a smaller format were discussed. Evan was not looking for a motion and the board had no objections so the renewal will be for one year.

MEDIA PLACEMENTS:

Met Golfer Magazine, Discerning Traveler Magazine, Providence Business News

INFORMATION CENTER:

The total number of visitors to the Information Center for April was 22,564 down 17.63% from last April. The total number of visitors to the Information Center for the year was 44,356, down 15.81% compared to last year at this same time. The main source of visitors still comes from New York, Massachusetts, Connecticut, New Jersey and Rhode Island.

V. NEW BUSINESS:

The board received a letter from IDC, Inc., The Newport Experience, seeking support of the NCCVB regarding their Goat Island Development. The board discussed the matter and determined not to take a position. For the record, Jeanne Marie Napolitano, recused herself from this discussion. Evan explained the purpose was to keep the board members informed and to have a discussion, no motion is necessary.

VI. ADJOURNMENT:

A motion was made to adjourn by Rocky Kempenaar and seconded by Donna Kolher. It passed unanimously and the meeting adjourned at 2:50pm. The next NCCVB board meeting will be Tuesday, June 12th at the Gateway Visitors Center.